

NEW YORK

TWENTIETH-CENTURY HERMIT.

Modern Diogenes Leads a Life of Solitude Hardly a Stone's Throw From the Teeming Populace of a Great Metropolis.

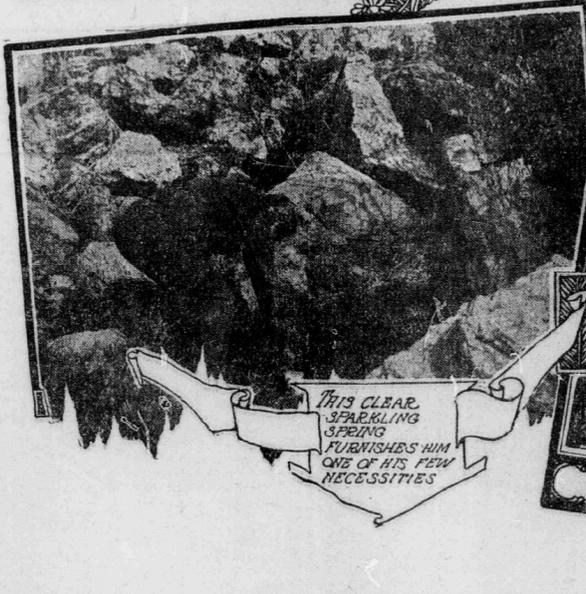
New York, May 24. NOT far from the upper extremity of Manhattan Island, in a diminutive hovel of his own construction, dwells a mysterious being upon whom has descended the mantle of Anselm and other famed recluses of the olden time. The tranquil Hudson sweeps his very dooryard as it speeds its silent course to the sea, and the frowning Fallades, towering in rock-ribbed majesty on the farther river-side, are not more solitary and aloof than the alien of whose little world they form a boundary.

Hardly a stone's throw from his habitation the teeming populace of a great city surges to and fro. Upon the pavements sounds the tattoo of myriads of hurrying feet. Voices, the clangor of gongs and roar of traffic fill the air, but all are blended, ere reaching the hermit's ear, into a deep, musical murmur which is the sole evidence of the close proximity of his detested fellow-beings. A passer-by, pausing on the crest of the high embankment, might gaze down at the concealing brush and bowlders below without even suspecting the presence of the cleverly disposed dwelling, which is only visible when approached from the water front. Even then one may pass and re-pass a dozen times before it is discovered.

Poisoned His Spring.

The hut itself is scarcely larger than a respectable dog kennel; yet for an indeterminate number of years it has been the sole shelter of an adult human being. Old packing boxes were used in its construction. Within are a few battered cooking utensils and a rude bench which serves as a bed, with some old life-preservers in lieu of a mattress. A spring, clear and sparkling, supplies abundant drinking water. One winter it was tainted by sewage and the recluse was forced to quench his thirst with melted snow. Eventually the health board ordered the repair of the faulty sewer without knowing that they were rendering an inestimable service to one whose name did not appear upon the roll of taxpayers.

Who this mysterious being is—whence he came—what crushed ambition, wrong, or disappointment was the means of thus embittering his life and estranging him from his kind, no one has learned. Probably not more than a dozen souls know of his existence. These



THIS CLEAR, SPARKLING SPRING FURNISHES HIM ONE OF HIS FEW NECESSITIES



IN THIS MISERABLE SHACK THE MISANTHROPE HIDES FROM THE PEELING EYES OF THE DUSTY WORLD



are chiefly professional hoboes, toward whom he preserves an armed neutrality. On the one hand, he is careful not to antagonize that arrest and imprisonment on the charge of vagrancy would seem a calamity no greater than the neighborhood, for fear their presence

may become known to the police and his downfall be coupled with their own. So attached has he become to his miserable abode that arrest and imprisonment on the charge of vagrancy would seem a calamity no greater than the dread command of the law—"move on."

How he lives, where he obtains food, and whence comes the money to supply his simple needs, are mysteries as impenetrable as the identity of the man himself. No one has ever seen him coming or going, and he makes no confidences. His only recreation is to read

the daily papers, which he is said to do with unvarying regularity. On the one or two occasions when he has permitted himself to be drawn into conversation by some chance discoverer of his retreat, he has displayed an intelligent grasp of current topics, and de-

spite the vein of bitterness and misanthropy coloring his speech he has never displayed any anarchistic or revolutionary tendencies. To be forgotten is apparently the sole desire of this latter day hermit, and next to this is to be let alone.

THE ORIGINAL SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES.

The Naval Treaty

(Continued from First Page.)

"It is absolutely impossible. A rat could not conceal himself either in the room or the corridor. There is no cover at all."

"Thank you. Pray proceed."

"The commissioner, seeing by my pale face that something was to be feared, had followed me upstairs. Now we both rushed along the corridor and down the steep steps which led to Charles street. The door at the bottom was closed, but unlocked. We flung it open and rushed out. I can distinctly remember that as we did so there came three chimes from a neighboring clock. It was a quarter to 10."

"That is of enormous importance," said Holmes, making a note upon his shirt cuff.

"The night was very dark, and a thin, warm rain was falling. There was no one in Charles street, but a great traffic was going on, as usual, in Whitehall, at the extremity. We rushed along the pavement, bare-headed as we were, and at the far corner we found a policeman standing.

"A robbery has been committed," I gasped. "A document of immense value has been stolen from the foreign office. Has anyone passed this way?"

"I have been standing here for a quarter of an hour, sir," said he; "only one person has passed during that time—a woman, tall and elderly, with Paisley shawl."

"Ah, that is only my wife," cried the commissioner; "has no one else passed?"

"No one."

"Then it must be the other way that the thief took," cried the fellow, tugging at my sleeve.

"But I was not satisfied, and the attempts which he made to draw me away increased my suspicions.

"Which way did the woman go?" I cried.

"I don't know, sir. I noticed her pass, but I had no special reason for watching her. She seemed to be in a hurry."

"How long ago was it?"

"Oh, not very many minutes."

"Within the last five?"

"Well, it could not be more than five."

"You're only wasting your time, sir, and every minute counts of importance," cried the commissioner; "take my word for it that my old woman has nothing to do with it, and come down to the other end of the street. Well, if you won't, I will. And with that she rushed off in the other direction."

"But I was after him in an instant and caught him by the sleeve."

"Where do you live?" said I.

"16 Ivy Lane, Brixton," he answered. "But don't let yourself be drawn away upon a false scent, Mr. Phelps. Come to the other end of the street and let us see if we can hear of anything."

"Nothing was to be lost by following his advice. With the policeman we both hurried down, but only to find the street full of traffic, many people coming and going, but all only too eager to get to a place of safety upon so wet a night. There was no loungeer who could tell us who had passed."

"Then we returned to the office, and searched the stairs and the passage without result. The corridor which led to the room was laid down with a kind of creamy linoleum which shows an impression very easily. We examined it very carefully, but found no outline of any footmark."

"Had it been raining all evening?"

"Since about 7."

"How is it, then, that the woman who came into the room about 9 left no traces with her muddy boots?"

"I am glad you raised the point. It occurred to me at the time. The charwomen are in the habit of taking off their boots at the commissioner's office, and putting on list slippers."

"That is very clear. There were no marks, then, though the night was a wet one? The chain of events is certainly one of extraordinary interest. What did you do next?"

"We examined the room also. There is no possibility of a secret door, and the windows are quite thirty feet from the ground. Both of them were fastened on the inside. The carpet prevents any possibility of a trap-door, and the ceiling is of the ordinary whitewashed kind. I will pledge my life that who-

ever stole my papers could only have come through the door."

"How about the fireplace?"

"There is none. There is a stove. The bell rope hangs from the wire just to the right of the desk. Whoever rang it must have come right up to the desk to do it. But why should any criminal wish to ring the bell? It is a most inishable mystery."

"Certainly the incident was unusual. What were your next steps? You examined the room, I presume, to see if the introducer had left any traces—any cigar-end or dropped glove or hairpin or other trifle?"

"No smell."

"Well, he never thought of that."

"Ah, a scent of tobacco would have been worth a great deal to us in such an investigation."

"I never smoke myself, so I think I should have observed it if there had been any smell of tobacco. There was absolutely no clue of any kind. The only tangible fact was that the commissioner's wife—Mrs. Tangey was the name—had hurried out of the place. He could give no explanation save that it was about the time when the woman always went home. The policeman and myself had our best plan would be to seize the woman before she could get rid of the papers, presuming that she had them."

"The alarm had reached Scotland Yard by this time, and Mr. Forbes, the detective, came round at once and took up the case with a great deal of energy. We hired a hansom, and in half an hour we were at the address which had been given to us. A young woman opened the door, who proved to be Mrs. Tangey's eldest daughter. Her mother had not come back yet, and we were shown into the front room to wait."

"About ten minutes later a knock came at the door, and here we made the one serious mistake for which I blame myself. Instead of opening the door ourselves, we allowed the girl to do so. We heard her say, 'Mother, there are two men in the house, waiting to see you,' and an instant afterward we heard the patter of feet rushing down the passage. Forbes flung open the door, and we both ran into the back room or kitchen, but the woman had got there before us. She stared at us with defiant eyes, and then, suddenly recognizing me, an expression of absolute astonishment came over her face."

"Why, if it isn't Mr. Phelps, of the office," she cried.

"Come, come, who did you think we were when you ran away from us?" asked my companion.

"I thought you were the brokers," said she, "we have had some trouble with a tradesman."

"That's not quite good enough," answered Forbes. "We have reason to believe that you have taken a paper of importance from the foreign office, and that you ran in here to dispose of it. You'd better come back with us to Scotland Yard to be searched."

"It was in vain that she protested and resisted. A four-wheeler was brought, and we all three drove back in it. We had first made an examination of the kitchen, and especially of the kitchen fire, to see whether she might have made away with the papers during the instant that she was alone. There were no signs, however, of any ashes or scraps. When we reached Scotland Yard she was handed over at once to the female searcher. I waited in an agony of suspense until she came back with her report. There were no signs of the papers."

"Then for the first time the horror of my situation came in its full force. Hitherto I had been acting, and action had numbed thought. I had been so confident of regaining the treaty at once that I had not dared to think of what would be the consequence if I failed to do so. But now there was nothing more to be done, and I had leisure to realize my position. It was horrible. Watson there would tell you that I was a nervous, sensitive boy at school. It is my nature, I thought of my uncle and of his colleagues in the cabinet, of the shame which I had brought upon him, upon myself, upon every one connected with me. What though I was the victim of an extraordinary accident? No allowance is made for accidents where diplomatic interests are at stake. I was ruined, shamefully,

of some stimulating medicine. Holmes sat silently, with his head thrown back and his eyes closed, in an attitude which might seem listless to a stranger, but which I knew betokened the most intense self-absorption.

"Your statement has been so explicit," said he at last, "that you have really left me very few questions to ask. There is one of the very utmost importance, however. Did you tell any one that you had this special task to perform?"

"No one."

"You can imagine the state of things here when they were roused from their beds by the doctor's ringing, and found me in this condition. Poor Annie here and my mother were broken-hearted. Dr. Ferrier had just heard enough from the detective at the station to be able to give an idea of what had happened, and his story did not mend matters. It was evident to all that I was in for a long illness, so Joseph was bundled out of this cheery bed room, and it was turned into a sick room for me. Here I have lain, Mr. Holmes, for over nine weeks, unconscious, and raving with brain fever. If it had not been for Miss Harrison here and for the doctor's care I should not be speaking to you now. She nursed me by day and a hired nurse has looked after me by night, for in my mad fits I was capable of anything. Slowly my reason has cleared, but it is only during the last three days that my memory has quite returned. Sometimes I wish that it never had. The first thing that I did was to wire to Mr. Forbes, who had the cast in hand. He came out, and assures me that, though everything has been done, no trace of a clue has been discovered. The commissioner and his wife have

"Thank you. I have no doubt I can get details from Forbes. The authorities are excellent at amassing facts, though they do not always use them to advantage. What a lovely thing a rose is!"

He walked past the couch to the open window, and held up the drooping stalk of a moss-rose, looking down at the dainty blend of crimson and green. It was a new phase of his character to me, for I had never before seen him show any keen interest in natural objects.

"You have furnished me with seven, but, of course, I must test them before I can pronounce upon their value."

"You suspect some one?"

"I suspect myself."

"Of coming to conclusions too rapidly?"

"Then go to London and test your conclusions."

"Your advice is very excellent, Miss Harrison," said Holmes, rising. "I think, Watson, we cannot do better. Do not allow yourself to indulge in false hopes, Mr. Phelps. The affair is a very tangled one."

"I shall be in a fever until I see you again," cried the diplomatist.

"Well, I'll come out by the same train tomorrow, though it's more than likely that my report will be a negative one."

"God bless you for promising to come," cried our client. "It gives me fresh life to know that something is being done. By the way, I have had a letter from Lord Holdhurst."

"Ha! what did he say?"

"He was cold, but not harsh. I dare say my severe illness prevented him from being it. He repeated that the matter was of the utmost importance, and added that no steps would be taken about my future—by which he means, of course, my dismissal—until my health was restored and I had an opportunity of repairing my misfortune."

"Well, that was reasonable and considerate," said Holmes. "Come, Watson, for we have a good day's work before us in town."

Mr. Joseph Harrison drove us down to the station, and we were soon whirling up in a Portsmouth train. Holmes was sunk in profound thought, and hardly opened his mouth until we had passed Clapham Junction.

"It's a very cheery thing to come into London by any of these lines which run high, and allow you to look down upon the houses like this."

I thought he was joking, for the view was so dreary, but he soon explained himself.

"Look at those big, isolated clumps of building rising up above the slates, like brick islands in a lead-colored sea."

"The board-schools."

"Lighthouses, my boy! Beacons of the future! Capesides with hundreds of bright little seeds in each, out of which will spring the wiser, better England of the future. I suppose that man Phelps does not drink."

"I should not think so."

"My practice is, I am bound to take every possibility into account. The poor devil has certainly got himself into very deep water, and it's a question whether we shall ever be able to get him ashore. What did you think of Miss Harrison?"

"A girl of strong character."

"Yes, but she is a good sort, or I am mistaken. She and her brother are the only children of an ironmaster somewhere up Northumberland way. He got engaged to her when traveling last winter, and she came down to be introduced to his people, with her brother as escort. Then came the smash, and she stayed on to nurse her lover, while brother Joseph, finding himself pretty snug, stayed on, too. I've been making a few independent inquiries, you see. But today must be a day of inquiries."

"My practice," I began.

"Oh, if you find your own cases more interesting than mine—" said Holmes, with some asperity.

"I was going to say that my practice could get along very well for a day or two, since it is the slackest time in the year."

"Excellent," said he, recovering his good humor. "Then we'll look into this matter together. I think that we should begin by seeing Forbes. He can probably tell us all the details we want until we know from what side the case is to be approached."

"You said you had a clue?"

"Well, we have several, but we can only test their value by further inquiry. The most difficult crime to track is the one which is purposeless. Now this is not purposeless. Who is it who profits by it? There is the French ambassador, there is the Russian, there is whoever might sell it to either of these, and there is Lord Holdhurst."

"Lord Holdhurst?"

"Well, it is just conceivable that a statesman might find himself in a position where he was not sorry to have such a document accidentally destroyed."

"Not a statesman with the honorable record of Lord Holdhurst?"

"It is a possibility, and we cannot afford to disregard it. We shall see the noble lord's name first out if he can

tell us anything. Meanwhile I have already set inquiries on foot."

"Already?"

"Yes; I sent wires from Woking station to every evening paper in London. This advertisement will appear in each of them."

He handed over a sheet torn from a note-book. On it was scribbled in pencil: "Ten pounds reward. The number of the cab which dropped a fare at or about the door of the foreign office in Charles street at quarter to 10 in the evening of May 23. Apply 221 Baker street."

"You are confident that the thief came in a cab?"

"If not, there is no harm done. But if Mr. Phelps is correct in stating that there is no hiding-place either in the room or the corridors, then the person must have come from outside. If he came from the outside on so wet a night, and yet left no trace of damp upon the linoleum, which was examined within a few minutes of his passing, then it is exceedingly probable that he came in a cab. Yes, I think that we may safely deduce a cab."

"It sounds plausible."

"That is one of the clues of which I spoke. It may lead us to something. And then, of course, there is the bell—which is the most distinctive feature of the case. Why should the bell ring? Was it the thief who did it out of bravado? Or was it some one who was with the thief who did it in order to prevent the crime? Or was it an accident? Or was it—?" He sank back into the chair of intense and silent thought, from which few signs of his passing, but it seemed to me, accustomed as I was to his every mood, that some new possibility had dawned suddenly upon him.

It was twenty past 3 when we reached our terminus, and after a hasty luncheon at the buffet we pushed on at once to Scotland Yard. Holmes had already wired to Forbes, and we found him waiting to receive us—a small, foxy man with a sharp but by no means amiable expression. He was decidedly frigid in his manner to us, especially when he heard the errand upon which we had come.

"I've heard of your methods before now, Mr. Holmes," said he, tartly. "You are ready enough to use all the information that the police can lay at your disposal, and then you try to finish the case yourself and bring discredit on them."

"On the contrary," said Holmes, "out of my last fifty-three cases my name has only appeared in four, and the police have had all the credit in forty-nine. I don't blame you for not knowing this, for you are young and inexperienced, but if you wish to get on in your new duties you will work with me and not against me."

"I'd be very glad of a hint or two," said the detective, changing his manner. "I've certainly had no credit from the case so far."

"What steps have you taken?"

"Tangey, the commissioner, has been shadowed. He left the Guards with a good character and we can find nothing against him. His wife is a bad lot, though. I fancy she knows more about this than she appears."

"Have you shadowed her?"

"We have set one of our women on to her. Mrs. Tangey drinks, and our woman has been with her twice when she was well on, but she could get nothing out of her."

"I understand that they have had brokers in the house?"

"Yes, but they were paid off."

"Where did the money come from?"

"That was all right. His pension was due. They have not shown any sign of being in funds."

"What explanation did she give of having answered the bell when Mr. Phelps rang for the coffee?"

"She said that her husband was very tired and she wished to relieve him."

"Well, certainly that would agree with his being found a little later asleep in his chair. There is nothing against them then but the woman's character. Did you ask her why she hurried away that night? Her haste attracted the attention of the police constable."

"She was later than usual and wanted to get home."

"Did you point out to her that you and Mr. Phelps, who started at least twenty minutes after her, got home before her?"

"She explains that by the difference between a bus and a hansom."

"Did she make it clear why, on reaching

"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as in religion," said he, leaning with his back against the shutters. "It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers. All other things, our powers, our desires, our food, are all really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its color are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers."

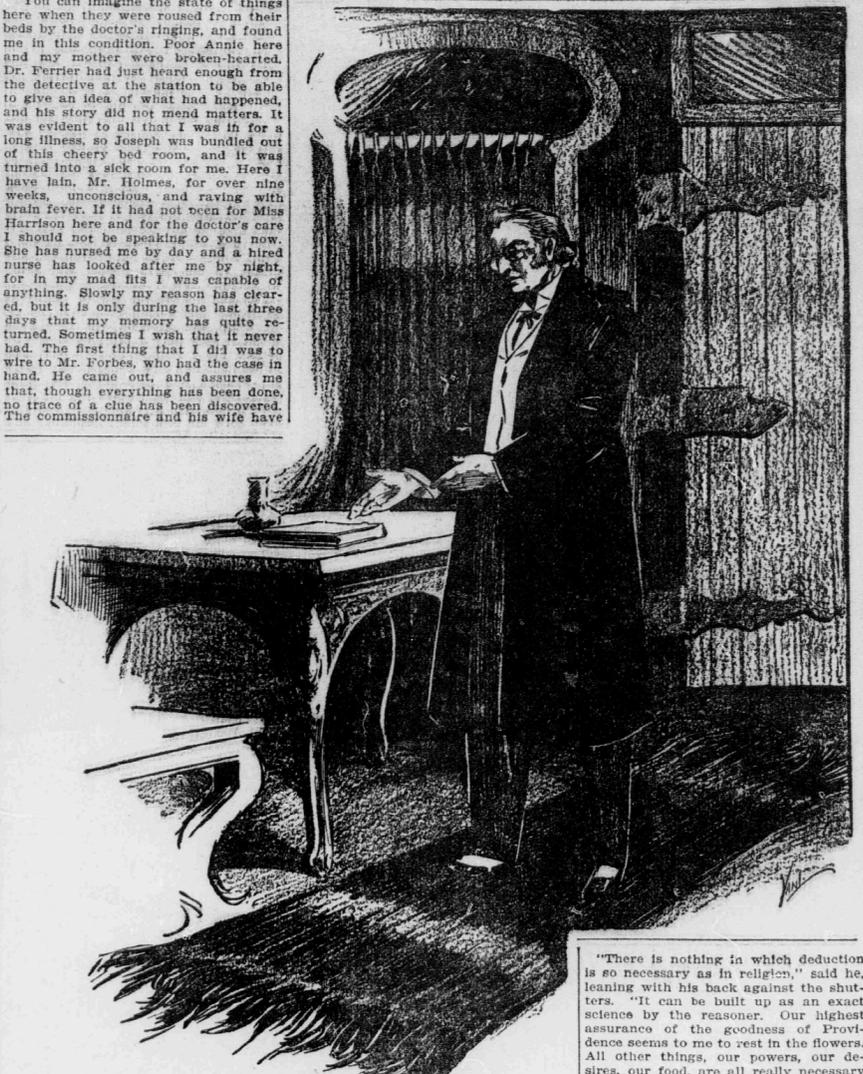
Foray Phelps and his nurse looked at Holmes during this demonstration with surprise and a good deal of disappointment written upon their faces. He had fallen into a reverie, with the moss-rose between his fingers. It had lasted some minutes before the young lady broke in upon it.

"Do you see any prospect of solving this mystery, Mr. Holmes?" she asked, with a touch of asperity in her voice.

"Oh, the mystery!" he answered, coming back with a start to the realities of life. "Well, it would be absurd to deny that the case is a very abstruse and complicated one, but I can promise you that I will look into the matter and let you know any points which may strike me."

"Oh, I have heard—Coltream Guards."

"Do you see any clue?"



"We can hardly suppose, Mr. Holmes, that the thief took the treaty in order to frame it and hang it up."

been examined in every way without any light being thrown upon the matter. The suspicions of the police then rested upon young Gorot, who, as you may remember, stayed over time in the office that night. His remaining behind and his French name were really the only two points which could suggest suspicion; but, as a matter of fact, I did not begin work until he had gone, and his people are of Huguenot extraction, but as English in sympathy and tradition as you and I are. Nothing was found to implicate him in any way, and there the matter dropped. I turn to you, Mr. Holmes, as absolutely my last hope. If you fail me, then my honor as well as my position are forever forfeited."

"The invalid sank back upon his cushions, tired out by this long recital, while his nurse poured him out a glass

"Not Miss Harrison here, for example?"

"No. I had not been back to Woking between getting the order and executing the commission."

"And none of your people had by chance been to see you?"

"None."

"Did any of them know their way about in the office?"

"Oh, yes, all of them had been shown over it."

"Still, of course, if you said nothing to any one about the treaty these inquiries are irrelevant."

"I said nothing."

"Do you know anything of the commissioner?"

"Nothing except that he is an old soldier."

"What regiment?"

"Oh, I have heard—Coltream Guards."

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